



**NEW ENGLAND  
COMMON ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

**Released Items  
2008**

**Grade 7  
Reading**

# Reading

The small boat pitched back and forth over the rough waves.

- ❶ Which sentence uses the word pitched as it is used in the box?
- A. We pitched our tent near the river.
  - B. Jane pitched her voice low as she told the secret.
  - C. The tree's branches pitched in the wind.
  - D. Simon pitched the ball directly to the batter.

Katherine had not planned to go to the beach that day—it had just been a whim.

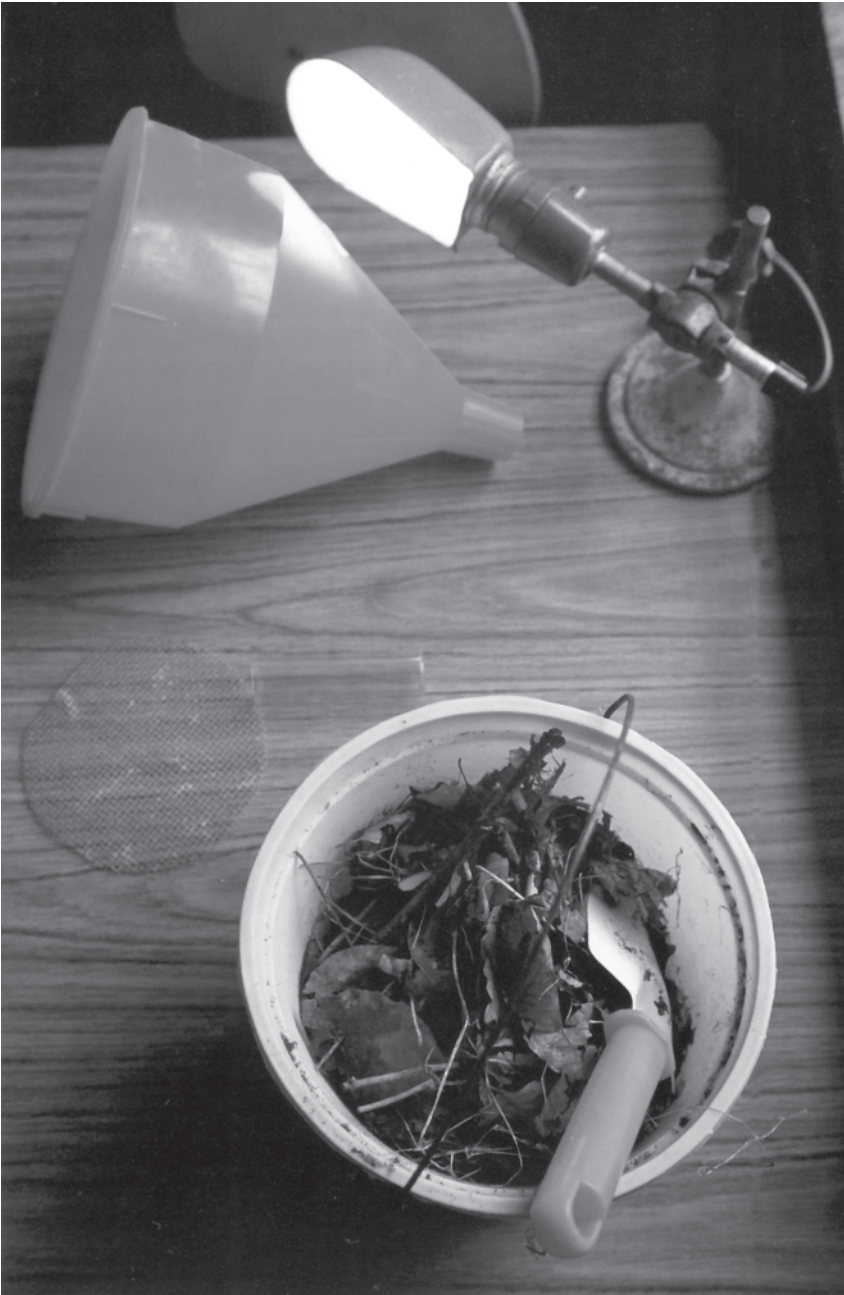
- ❷ What does the word whim mean as it is used in the box?
- A. a weak reason
  - B. a sudden idea
  - C. a scheduled event
  - D. a regretted decision

*A Berlese funnel can be fun to make and useful to have. Read this article and then answer the questions that follow.*

## Using a Berlese Funnel

**A**

Berlese funnel (also called a Tullgren funnel) can help you find out what animals live in leaf litter and soil. It will help you collect very tiny animals that you might otherwise overlook. You can make your own Berlese funnel from equipment you buy or find around the house.



### Materials

- a large plastic or metal funnel
- glass vial, just big enough to fit over the narrow end of the funnel (optional)
- piece of coarse wire screen (a 1 centimeter or 1/4 inch mesh will do)
- wire cutters or tin snips
- jar, bucket, or three-legged stand to hold funnel
- some leaf litter or soil, freshly collected
- a gooseneck lamp or an adjustable desk lamp
- jar lid or petri dish

### Directions

1. Cut a circular piece from the wire screen with the wire cutters or tin snips. Make the circle three or more inches in diameter.
2. If you are using a purchased funnel that comes with a glass collecting vial, slip the vial onto the small end of the funnel.
3. Place the circular screen inside the funnel.





4. Set the funnel on the three-legged stand, or place it in a jar or bucket that will hold the funnel upright.



5. Fill the funnel several inches deep with leaf litter. Make sure to use fresh litter that you've collected that day.



6. Turn on the lamp, and position it so that the bulb shines down onto the leaf litter. Make sure the bulb is close enough to warm the litter, but not positioned in a way that might melt a plastic funnel!

7. After half an hour or so, lift the funnel and look into the collecting vial, bucket, or jar. If no animals are present, set the funnel back under the light and wait a while longer. You may want to check your funnel frequently at first to see how long it takes for animals to begin dropping into the jar. You can leave your funnel under the light for as long as you want, provided you are nearby.

8. Study the creatures you have collected. You might want to put some in a jar lid or plastic petri dish so that you can observe them with a hand lens or microscope. You will probably find animals that are new to you, as well as some familiar ones.

9. When you are through, return the animals you collected to the litter or soil they crawled out of. Put the litter or soil back where you found it.

## Real Pseudo



You may find a pseudoscorpion among the animals you collect with your Berlese funnel. Although pseudoscorpions are common in leaf litter, they are so small that people usually don't notice them. Most pseudoscorpions are less than two-tenths of an inch long. Though they do have fierce-looking pincers, they are too small to pinch or bite a person. They prey on tiny insects.

**Note:** You can use a mothball instead of a light bulb to drive the animals out of the litter. Simply tape a mothball to a piece of wood or cardboard large enough to cover the open top of your funnel. Place the board on the funnel, with the mothball "inside," over the litter. Use the funnel outdoors, on the porch, or in another well-ventilated area, since it isn't healthy to inhale mothball fumes.

3 Which material is **not** necessary to have when making a Berlese funnel?

- A. a glass vial
- B. wire screen
- C. leaf litter
- D. a jar lid

4 The purpose of the three-legged stand is to

- A. increase the surface area.
- B. retain the leaf litter.
- C. keep the funnel in place.
- D. eliminate unnecessary litter.

5 In step 5, what advice is provided?

- A. Be sure to use fresh litter when lining the funnel.
- B. Do not place the bulb too close to the litter.
- C. Check the jar or vial often for animals.
- D. Return the animals to the soil when finished.

6 The reason for including step 6 is to

- A. explain bulb use to the reader.
- B. entertain the reader with good advice.
- C. inform the reader about the funnel's function.
- D. explain to the reader how to see the animals.

7 In your own words, describe the design and purpose of the Berlese funnel.

- 8 According to step 7, the light may be kept on
- A. only for short periods of time.
  - B. for a half an hour.
  - C. until the leaf litter is dry.
  - D. as long as it is supervised.

- 9 According to the article, another way to drive animals out of litter is with a
- A. loud noise.
  - B. glass vial.
  - C. mothball.
  - D. microscope.

- 10 What is the purpose of the section “Real Pseudo”?
- A. to give the reader a lesson about animals
  - B. to help the reader understand how the funnel is built
  - C. to let the reader know there are many uses for the funnel
  - D. to give an example of an animal that might be found in the funnel

- 11 The word inhale means
- A. ignite.
  - B. breathe.
  - C. capture.
  - D. destroy.

- 12 Which steps in the directions are important to guarantee that the Berlese funnel works correctly? Explain your answer by using information from the article.

# Acknowledgments

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## Grade 7 Reading Released Item Information

Released Item Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Content Strand <sup>1</sup>	WV	WV	II	II	II	IA	IA	II	II	II	WV	II
GLE Code	6-3	6-2	6-7	6-7	6-7	6-8	6-8	6-7	6-7	6-7	6-3	6-7
Depth of Knowledge Code	2	1	1	2	1	2	3	2	2	2	2	2
Item Type <sup>2</sup>	MC	MC	MC	MC	MC	MC	CR	MC	MC	MC	MC	CR
Answer Key	C	B	A	C	A	A		D	C	D	B	
Total Possible Points	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	4

<sup>1</sup>Content Strand: WV = Word ID/Vocabulary, LI = Literary/Initial Understanding, LA = Literary/Analysis & Interpretation,  
 II = Informational/Initial Understanding, IA = Informational/Analysis & Interpretation

<sup>2</sup>Item Type: MC = Multiple Choice, CR = Constructed Response